HOMEOWNERS
Center

You Can Build It In DC

ICC INTERNATIONAL CODE COUNCIL

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YOU CAN BUILD IT IN DC

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Preface

You Can Build It In DC! is a self-help guide provided by the International Code Council® Foundation (ICCF) and the District of Columbia (DC) Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs to aid “do-it-yourselfers” with building projects. Novices are encouraged to review each chapter, in order, for step-by-step guidance on essential topics, such as permit requirements, codes, plans, cost estimation, scheduling and more. Understanding and following the correct procedures for building projects will make the job easier and the finished project safer for the inhabitants.

The ICCF, a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization, is committed to increasing building safety and fire prevention throughout the world by sharing information, technology and expertise. Making You Can Build It In DC! available to the general public is one of the ways the ICCF is working to provide education that will help reduce loss of life and damage to properties. For more information about the ICCF, or to make a tax-deductible donation, visit www.icc-foundation.org.

You Can Build It In DC

You are considered a do-it-yourselfer when you act as your own general contractor, buying materials and hiring and coordinating any additional workers to do special parts of the job, such as the plumbing and wiring. Depending on how much of the labor you do yourself, you can cut your total expenses by 25 percent to 50 percent—a substantial savings.

This guide is geared towards the potential do-it-yourselfer and has two purposes:

1. To provide you with procedures, resources and references explaining when and where to go for help; and

2. To encourage you to obtain a building permit so that your work is safe, legal and does not have to be redone.

The chapters that follow are arranged to guide you step by step through the do-it-yourself process. If you are a novice, don't skip around; go directly to Chapter 2 and find out if you're really ready to knock out the kitchen wall and eat dinner out.

You should not try to "cost out" the job in real dollars (Chapter 5) until you have sketched your idea on paper and checked it against the local building codes (Chapters 2 and 3). If you then approach your building department with good drawings (Chapter 4) and a sense of what it's going to cost you, your permit application (Chapter 6) will go smoothly. The reviewers know residential codes backward and forward, and if they can see what you want and need, they can save you time and money. Meeting critical time deadlines (Chapter 7) can be tricky. Don't feel you have to sign any contracts until all of your necessary questions have been answered.

Lastly, the appendices are meant to be a collection of helpful hints and references.

Joe wanted to take out just one wall, so he could convert an unneeded bedroom into a dining room right off the kitchen. A few months after doing so he noticed cracks in the ceiling and leaks when it rained. When he climbed the roof to make repairs, the ceiling gave way below him. Joe had not realized that the wall was load bearing; without it, the roof had gradually sagged, causing cracks and creating a roof pond. When he went up to make repairs, his extra weight was just too much.

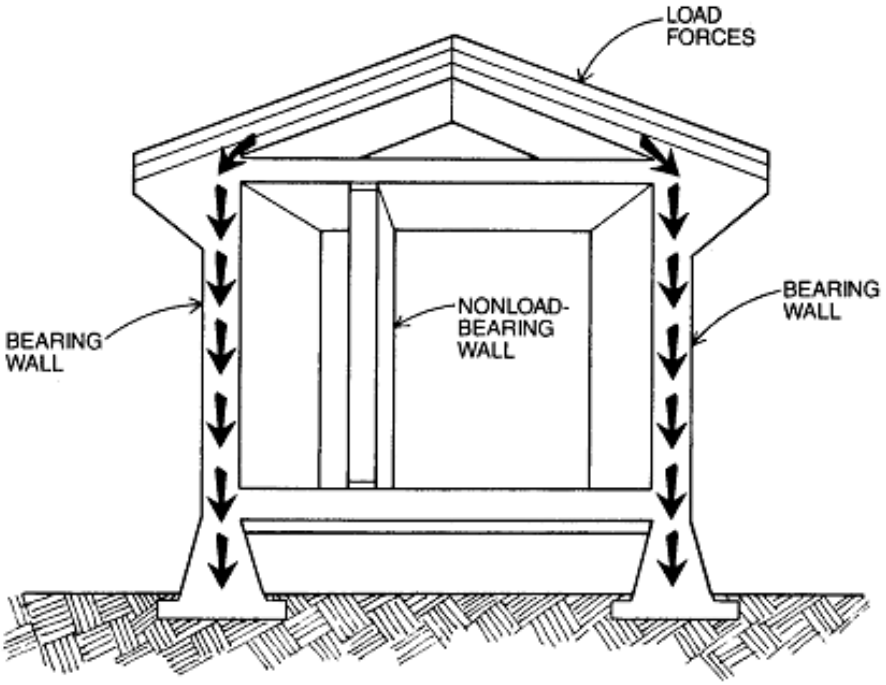
SEE GLOSSARY FOR UNFAMILIAR TERMS

You want to convert the garage. Or add a bedroom. But what does that really mean? First, you have to figure out whether the changes you are about to make are structural—moving walls, removing beams, etc.—or nonstructural—retiling, adding cabinets.

Structural changes are going to affect the stability of the building and will likely require a special support system during construction or a new support system as part of the finished building. Adding a second story may require strengthening the first-floor ceiling. Enlarging a window will require a larger header beam to take weight off the glass. If the outside walls are holding up the roof, an inside nonbearing wall can be knocked down with ease. But if the inside wall is a bearing wall, helping to hold up primary beams in the ceilings and roof, then those beams cannot be left unsupported without endangering you and your family.

Nonstructural changes like rewiring or new plumbing can be just as dangerous and certainly as expensive if you don't know what you are doing or how much you are going to have to do. In fact, putting in a new water heater may involve new foundation work you never suspected. Enlarging your kitchen can involve tile work and selecting the exact cabinet dimensions to fit the corners as well as plumbing, wiring and carpentry.

Start by making a list of all the jobs you think need to be done and who is going to do them—you, your relatives or a hired subcontractor. It may help to think in terms of the following trades: carpentry, masonry, electrical work, plumbing, painting, metal work, tiling, plasterwork, insulating and foundation work.



THE DEED

The papers that give you ownership of your property sometimes have restrictions on what you can do with your land. Fortunately, most do-it-yourself projects do not conflict with deed restrictions. But remember: what your deed says you cannot do—no matter what city law says—you cannot do.

Some of the types of restrictions you might find in your deed are public utility easements (strips of land that you cannot build on because work may have to be done on public utility lines that run through there) and public rights-of-way (a path that must be kept open).

You may find your deed at the District of Columbia (DC) Recorder of Deeds office or at your mortgage institution. If you have any questions about the language of the deed, get them cleared up so that you don't have any problems or surprises when you want to sell your property.

Roger M. was building a new house. When the foundation was being poured, he laid it where it was convenient. The problem was that the regulations said he had to have a 20-foot front yard. When the city found out that he in fact had only 12 feet, they stopped his work cold for two weeks while Roger petitioned for an exception. He was lucky. After a public hearing he was allowed to continue work. But, with lost time and aggravation, the convenient location had become downright inconvenient.

ZONING

DEEDS FOR PROPERTY ARE AVAILABLE AT THE OFFICE OF THE DC RECORDER OF DEEDS

DC zoning regulations are accompanied by a zoning map that divides the city into specific "zoned" areas depending on what types of activities are permitted there. These "zoning districts" are very exact about the use to which property may be put. When you apply for a building permit, your application will automatically go to the zoning technicians for review. Therefore, after checking your deed, check with zoning staff for the specific restrictions in your area.

You may find, for instance, that you live in a "residential single-family" district; that means that only single-family homes can be built in your neighborhood. Factories, department stores or zoos cannot suddenly spring up next door.

But zoning codes go even further. In an attempt to maintain the design and character of your neighborhood, the codes impose certain restrictions about where you can build on your property and how big your house may be. Zoning codes can make your plans illegal no matter how well you design the project, so get the information as soon as possible and save yourself a lot of trouble. See the appendix for a summary of what is permissible within each zone, according to the DC zoning regulations.

ZONING INFORMATION CAN BE SECURED AT THE DC OFFICE OF ZONING

BUILDING CODES

While zoning deals with your property and the relationship of your building to the neighborhood, building codes deal with the building itself. Identified usually as building, plumbing, mechanical, fire protection and electrical codes, they are designed to safeguard health and safety in every building. The following paragraphs highlight the contents of the most important code documents.

If you are doing a large-scale job, it will be worth your time to research the codes in a library. These codes are what building officials use daily to approve or disapprove building plans. Staff of the Building and Land Regulation Administration can explain these to you. The DC Construction Codes are the District of Columbia's supplement to the International Codes® published by the International Code Council®. Jurisdictions throughout the United States routinely adopt local amendments to the International Codes to allow flexibility for conditions that exist in their areas, such as older housing stocks and unique public policies. Go to the appendices to learn how you can review the International Codes and the DC Construction Codes.

The Building Code
This code specifies structural requirements, such as the sizes of rafters and joists, lintels over doors and headers over windows that you will need to span a particular distance. This information is usually in the form of charts. The building code also has specifics about foundations, how thick masonry must be, whether pier foundations are permitted, footing sizes required and other details. Finally, the building code includes life safety provisions such as those for smoke detectors, handrails, guardrails, etc.

Once you know the sizes and types of construction materials you will be required to use, you will have a sound basis for figuring your costs if you do the work yourself, and you will have working knowledge of the situation if you hire a professional to do some or all of the work.

The Mechanical Code
This code specifies what you can and cannot do with the mechanical installations in your home, such as heating, cooling, air conditioning and ventilation. You should check with the local building department for specifics to avoid the hazards of improper installation.

The Plumbing Code
This code governs all pipes that carry water or gas into or throughout a house and the waste pipes that carry water back out to the sewer or septic tank. The kinds of pipe permitted are also specified (copper, iron, plastic, etc.). Water heaters, sinks, toilets and dishwashers are all covered by codes.

The Electrical Code
This code tells you what you can and cannot do with the wiring of your home. Again, you should check with the local building department for specifics. The dangers of inadequate wiring and improper installation are great, and it is important to follow the regulations very carefully.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The Historic Landmark and Historic District Protection Act of 1978 requires that any permit applications for new construction, exterior alteration, demolition or subdivision involving an historic property or district must be reviewed to ensure that the proposed work is compatible with the historic property or district in which the property lies. The review of many permit applications for properties within historic districts is conducted as part of a public hearing process.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DRAW

Good drawings are one of the most important steps in completing your building. They will be used to cost out the job, get estimates from any subcontractors, show details in legal documents and obtain the necessary building permits. Better yet, they will give you a much clearer idea of how things will look once you are finished.

If you are doing a simple project, you may be able to do all the drawings yourself. A project that involves no new construction may need only one or two drawings called floor plans showing the house as it is now and what it will look like when you are through with construction.

For construction outside the existing walls of your home (a room addition), you will need several drawings in addition to your floor plans and your plot plan (from Chapter 4):

- A foundation plan showing the construction of your foundation and framing;
- One or two structural sections showing how the building will be put together;
- An exterior elevation showing the outside of the house;
- A DC surveyor's plat.

If your project is not too complicated, you may be able to combine several drawings in one diagram for the purpose of getting permits and estimates. On the other hand, if your project is complex, you may want to hire an architect or engineer to help with drawings and, later on, with subcontract agreements. Architecture students will often work for less, but you may have to wait weeks to find one or reschedule your job for summer vacation months. If you are planning future work, you might choose to take a drafting course.

YOU WILL NEED:

- Grid paper
- Tracing paper you can see through
- Soft, sharp pencils
- Eraser
- Straightedge or ruler
- Triangle
- Architect's scale or ruler

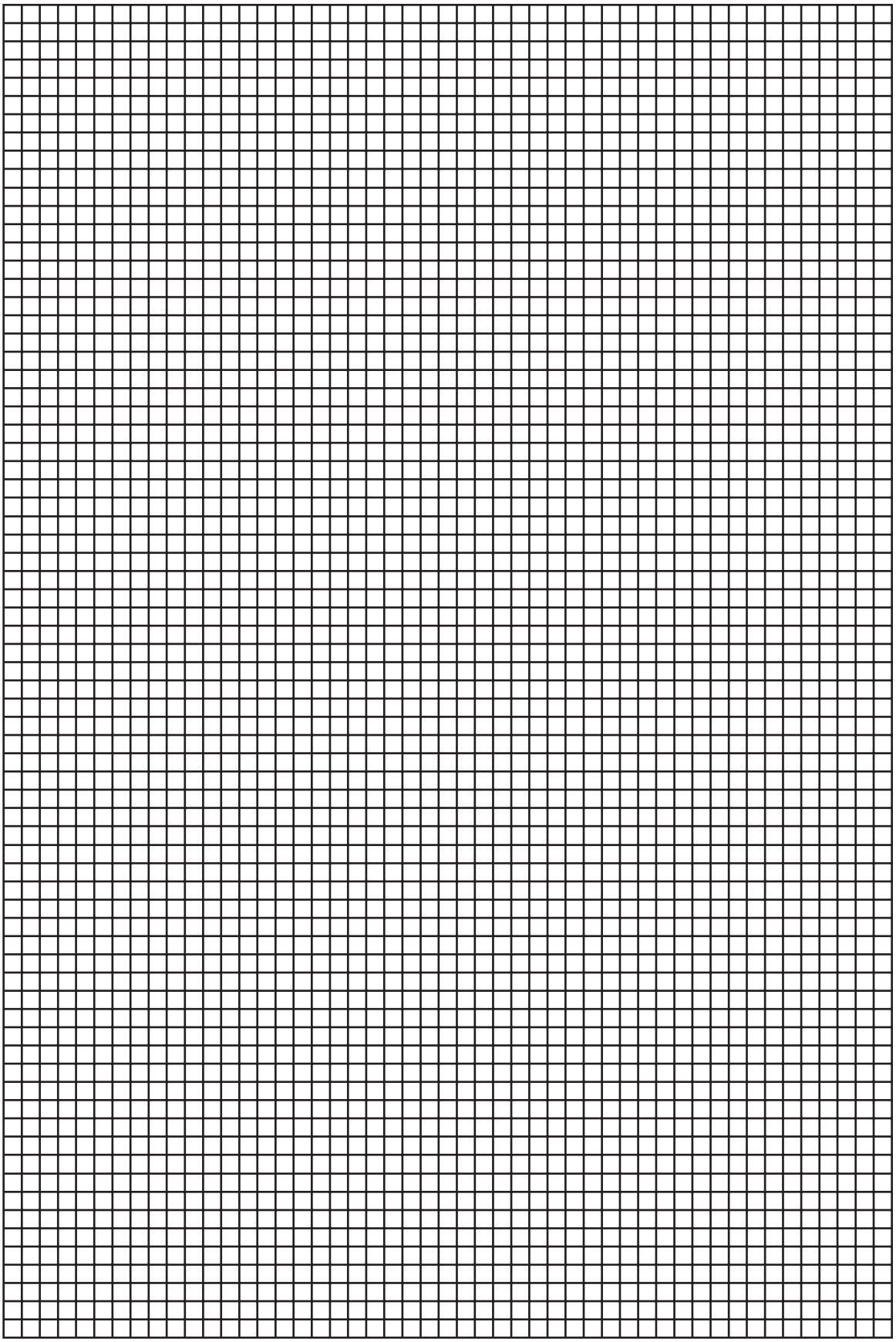
WHERE TO START

Start by looking through some good drawing books. They will save you an enormous amount of time and include much more helpful information and details you can copy.

Do your drawings on standard 11-inch by 17-inch paper so that you can make quick and cheap copies. The grid paper and the architect's scale on the next page should help you get started.
Using your grid paper, which has eight squares to the inch, you will see that:

- At 1/8-inch scale, one square equals one foot;
- At 1/4-inch scale, one square equals six inches and two squares equal one foot
- At 1/2-inch scale, one square equals three inches and four squares equal one foot.

Grid Paper: 8 squares to the inch



Generally, floor plans, foundation plans, and elevations are done at 1/4-inch scale, and sections (more detailed) are done at 1/2-inch scale. Site plans are done smaller. **The District of Columbia's minimum scale for drawings is 1/8 inch (one square) equals 1 foot.** There are no hard and fast rules. Choose a scale so your drawing won't run off the paper. Don't be timid about drawing lines and having to start over. Measuring and remeasuring is a constant part of all construction.

SKETCHES AND MODELS

KEEP DOING ROUGH SKETCHES

You probably have a mental picture of how great the new den or bedroom will look. Don't set your heart on it; it is going to change constantly the more you draw and the longer you plan. So don't be too stubborn and close out suggestions from friends and family that may make it better, and don't be afraid to scrap ideas and sketch new ones; however, keep all your sketches, even those that seem unworkable. Sometimes they are just the thing to improve a new design.

MAKE AND USE A MODEL

It is extremely helpful to make a simple cardboard model early in your drawing process. Many cardboard boxes are 1/8-inch thick, which is equal to a standard 6-inch wall thickness at 1/4-inch scale. Small wooden or cardboard blocks cut approximately to scale to represent furniture will help you to see how big a room is, where people will enter and see out, and what will fit where. So will a small cardboard rectangle cut to represent a 6-foot person.

Keep this model no matter how crude it looks. It will be extremely helpful to glance at as you are drawing up construction details.

RULES OF THUMB

LABEL EVERYTHING ON YOUR DRAWINGS. YOU WILL NOT BE THERE TO EXPLAIN THEM WHEN THE PLANS ARE CHECKED.

- Contact the Building and Land Regulation Administration first to find out what drawings are required. Also, ask if you will need to have an engineer's signature and seal for any work you plan to do. See the appendix for a telephone number.
- Show your drawings to a friend or family member before traveling down to the permit desk. If they can understand what you plan to do, plans reviewers should also.
- Dimensions are very important. Take the time to make your drawings accurate. The dimensions you show should be exact. The additional time it takes to do this will be well worth it when you go to build the project as you envisioned it.
- Draw up the basics first. Don't waste time doing special details unless the plans reviewers request them.

THE DRAWINGS

DO THE FLOOR PLAN FIRST

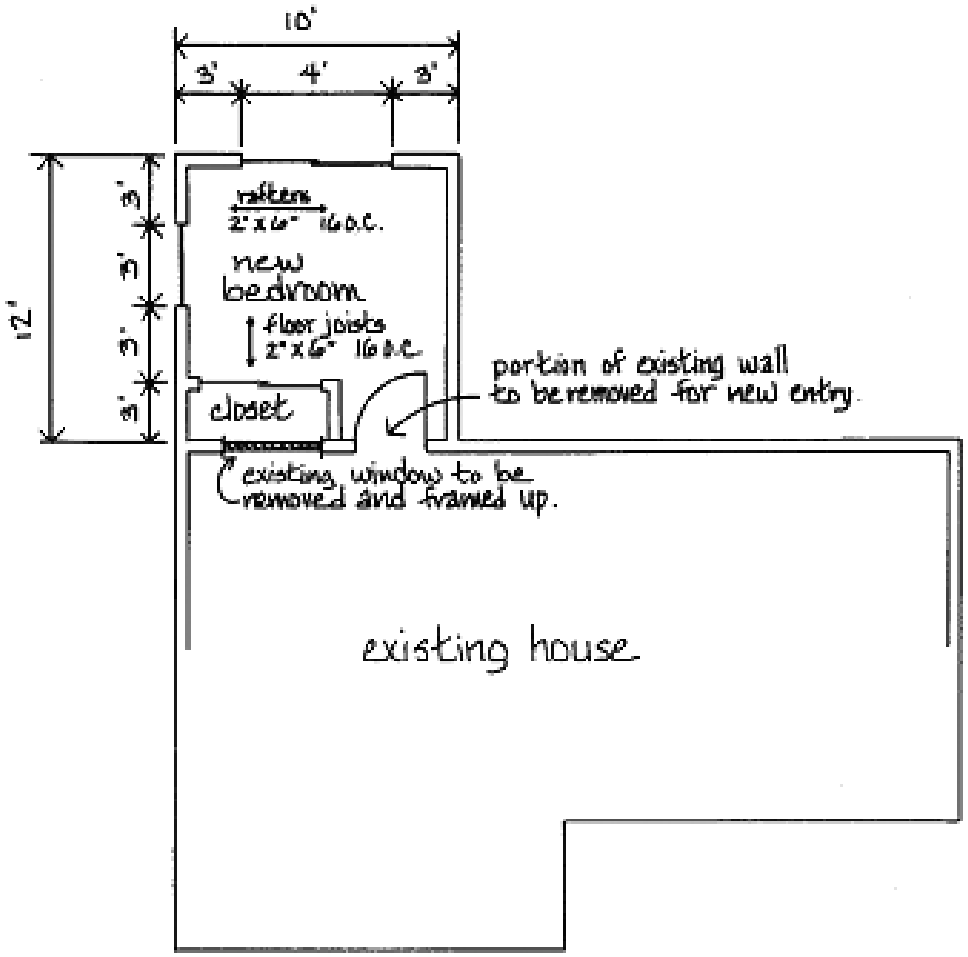
Floor Plan: This is the easiest drawing to do and the one from which all your other drawings can be developed. It will show permanent or structural elements of your new construction, including the following:

- Width and shape of rooms, doors and windows.
- Big appliances such as stoves.
- Plumbing fixtures such as bathtubs and toilets.
- Mechanical equipment such as heaters and ventilators.
- Electrical outlets and switches.
- Closets and built-in counters.

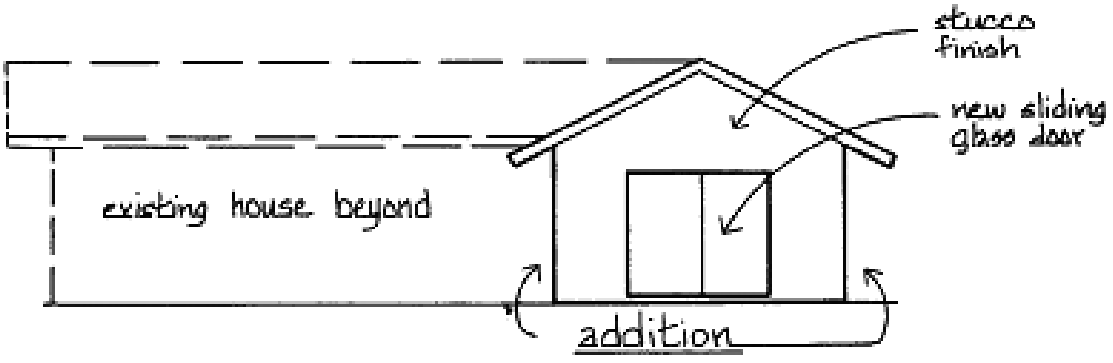
You do not have to show movable objects like furniture, and you don't have to draw the entire house, but you should draw enough of the existing structure to indicate exactly where the new room or addition fits in—adjoining hallways, windows that will be blocked up, etc.

Walls can all be shown 6 inches thick even though they will vary in your real construction. Materials used should also be written neatly on the drawing (linoleum flooring, aluminum windows). Rooms should be labeled.

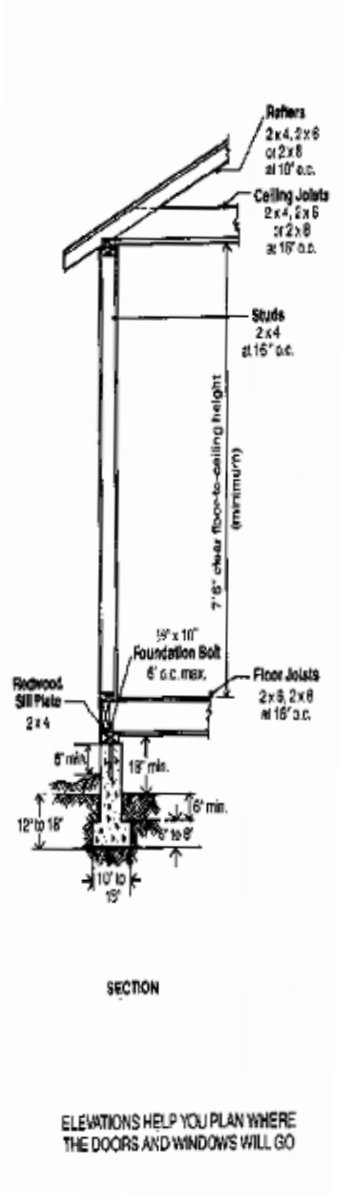
Simple plans can include framing information. One note on the plan can indicate the size and spacing of ceiling or floor joists, wall studs, roof rafters, primary beams or door and window headers. Be explicit about dimensions. You may know the exact size of your patio, but the plan reviewers will not. By convention, the width of rooms is measured from the outside of the exterior wall to the center of the interior wall. Windows and doors are measured from the inside of the opening, not the outside of the frame.



FLOOR PLAN not to scale



ELEVATION not to scale



SECTION

ELEVATIONS HELP YOU PLAN WHERE THE DOORS AND WINDOWS WILL GO

The Foundation Plan: A foundation is used to distribute the weight of the building over the land on which it sits. If you are not adding to your house, you do not need this drawing. If you are pouring more foundation, you will need to show the position and size of footings and floor materials. Footing sizes and spacings are fairly standardized, and you can check with your building department to find out what standards apply to your project.

Trace over the walls of your floor plan to determine where foundation members will be drawn. Typically, you will be choosing between wood floor construction or concrete slab floor construction. Usually, exterior walls are load bearing (holding up ceilings and roofs), and they are supported by concrete load-bearing footings. Interior walls rest directly on supporting piers under wood floors or directly on the concrete floor slab.

You will need to note the thickness of the concrete slab or the size and location of the concrete piers, wood girders and wood beams supporting wood flooring.

You should also draw a section of the foundation showing the relationship between the soil, footing and floor system. Outside walls will sit on the outside edge of a footing, while inside walls will be centered on a footing.

Sections: Section drawings literally slice through the building to show construction details. Your drawings need not be complex, but should include the following:

- How the wall frame connects to the foundation.
- How walls connect to ceilings and the roof.
- Roof slope.
- Size of framing members (rafters, studs, joists, etc.).
- Quality and type of materials used (clear redwood).
- 18-inch minimum distance from wood flooring to dirt.
- Heights between floors and ceilings.

Exterior Elevations: Elevations are drawn to show roughly what a building will look like when it is finished. They can be simple quick sketches showing the relationship of an addition to the existing house; position and heights of windows, doors and exterior vents; and roof slopes and overhangs.

Measurements for elevations do not need to be exact. But you should use your floor plan to give you the correct widths and locations of all wall openings. Also note the type of exterior finish materials you plan to use.

The total cost of your project will include the price of materials, the hourly wages or fees paid to tradesmen and other workers, rent on equipment and contingency funds for unexpected expenses. And don't forget you will have to add interest charges on any loans.

Your main contribution to your project will be your time. Whenever you can, you should plan to do the building yourself.

ESTIMATING COSTS

Estimating material and labor costs is much like writing down a grocery list. You might need:

- 2 x 4s, construction grade
- 5 bags cement
- 4 hours electrician at $20 per hour
- 1 sink, used

Look at the house diagram. Draw up a check list of specific materials that you will need for your particular project. Allow about 10 percent extra for error and waste on each item.

When pricing lumber, do not substitute poorer grades of wood to shave costs. It will cost you in the long run. Do compare—prices vary greatly. Consider renting tools too expensive to buy, and look for used parts for such things as doors, windows and even fixtures you can fix up.

A mail-order catalog is a very convenient shopping guide for pricing and ordering hardware and decorator materials. Lumber, plywood and paneling are better priced through a local dealer. You do not have to make a final selection at this time, but you do want a reasonable cost estimate; therefore, be sure to count everything—even nails can add up.

If you are modernizing a kitchen or bathroom, you might want to visit showrooms where you can get cabinet sets or sink units that are mass produced and sold at discount. Or maybe you just want to get ideas to build these yourself. Be sure to take along a tape measure so you can be sure that what you like will fit through your doors and into the correct corner.

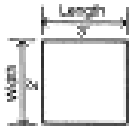
If expenses seem too great, you might want to break your project into several phases. Then you will need to make several separate checklists for materials so you don't run short in the middle.

Fred Fields is very proud of his latest accomplishment: a beautiful stone and wood two-story structure that blends well with the other homes in an affluent neighborhood. Fields is particularly proud of the money he saved by being his own general contractor and by doing some of the labor himself. For a small investment (including the price of the land), he now owns a home worth at least $450,000.

Fields always sought the lowest bids from subcontractors and usually chiseled these bids lower still before accepting them. The result is that, though his house appears beautiful and well built, "green" lumber was used in the framing. As this wood begins to dry and shrink, the wood members will no longer fit together.

Wood has a natural camber or curve, and when used as a floor joist, it should be placed with the curve up so that weight on the floor will straighten it out. In Fred's house, the wood was placed curve down, and weight on the floor will eventually cause sag.

COMPUTING MATERIALS NEEDED

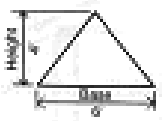


To get the square footage of a rectangular area, multiply the length by width in feet.
Example: 2' x 3' = 6 sq. ft.

Often, you will need to compute total floor, wall or ceiling areas to add up the exact amount of boards or sheathing you must buy. The easiest way to calculate odd-shaped rooms is to sketch the irregular area on graph paper and count up all full squares and those more than one-third full. Count each of these as 1 square foot.

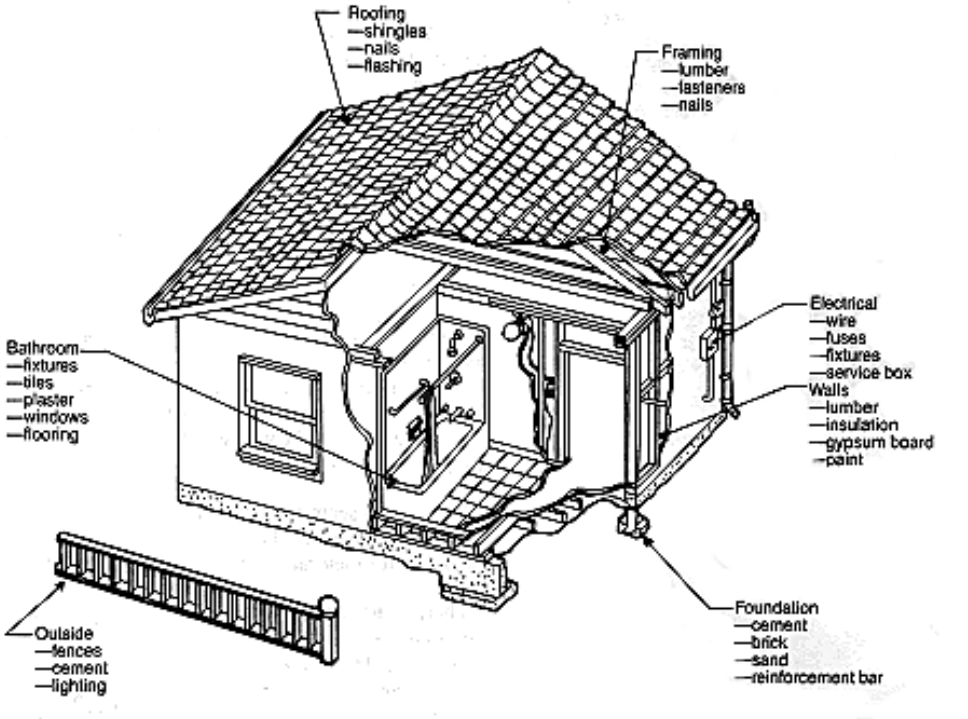
Remember to refer back to your drawings. A typical wall might call for the following materials:

1. 1/2-inch plywood.
2. Building paper.
3. 2x4 studs.
4. 3-inch insulation.
5. 1/2-inch gypsum board.
6. Tape for gypsum board.



To find the area of a triangle, multiply one-half of the length of the base by the height.
Example: ½ x 6' x 4' = 12 sq. ft.

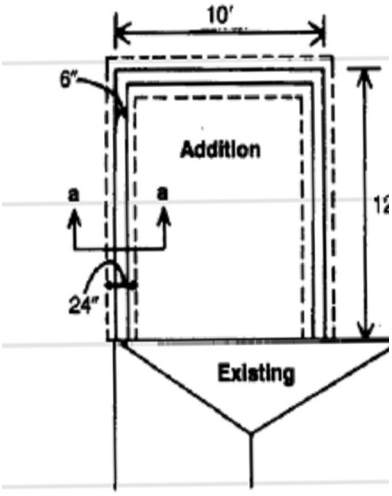
To find the area of a circle, multiply the square of the radius by 3.1416.
Example: 4' x 4' x 3.1416 = 50.3 sq. ft.



COST ESTIMATION

The material you use in your building project is measured and sold in certain, often unique, ways. Concrete is sold by the cubic yard, lumber by the linear or board foot, nails by the pound and wallboard by the sheet. Almost all building materials you do purchase, however, are dealt with in units of length, area or volume. While we can't discuss every type of material you may buy to build your project, the following examples deal with typical problems in cost estimation and illustrate what you should expect.

All the following examples are based on this fairly typical problem: determine the amount of concrete and its cost used in a foundation, the total cost of the foundation and the quantity and cost of floor joists for a 10-foot by 12-foot family room addition with a continuous foundation wall on three sides.



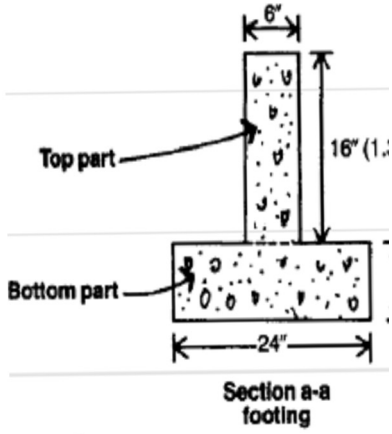
FOUNDATION PLAN

Example 1
To estimate the amount of concrete in cubic yards for a simple footing, use the following steps:

Step 1: Determine the area of the cross section of the footing in square feet.
Step 2: Multiply the area of the cross section by the length of the footing in feet. This is the volume.
Step 3: Step two gives the volume of the footing in cubic feet. Change that amount to cubic yards since concrete is ordered in units of cubic yards.

Calculations:

Step 1: Figure the cross-section area of the footing in two different parts as shown by the dotted line.
A. Area top part = 6 inches x 16 inches = 96 square inches
B. Area bottom part = 12 inches x 24 inches = 288 square inches
C. Total area = 96 + 288 = 384 square inches
D. Change square inches to square feet. 384 ÷ by 144 = 2.66
The cross-sectional area of the footing is 2.6 square feet.
Step 2: To find cubic feet, multiply the area of the cross section by the total length of all three foundation walls. This will give you the total volume of the footings. So 2.6 square feet x 32 linear feet = 85 cubic feet
Step 3: Change cubic feet to cubic yards. Since one cubic yard = 27 cubic feet (3-foot x 3-foot x 3-foot cube), you divide the volume in cubic feet by 27 cubic feet per cubic yard to get a total volume in cubic yards. So, 85 cubic feet divided by 27 cubic = 3.1 cubic yards fix space would order a total of 3.1 fix space cubic yards of concrete.



Section a-a
footing

144 square inches = 1 square foot

Now, add 10% to 15% to this figure to allow for spillage and waste. So 3.1 cubic yards x 1.15 (100% +15% extra = 115% or 1.15) = 3.56 cubic yards or approximately 3.6 cubic yards. Since concrete is usually only sold by the yard and half-yard, move to step four.

Step four: To find out how much 3½ yards of concrete will cost, just multiply the cost of one yard by the total number to be ordered. So if concrete sells for $50.00 a yard, 3½ yards would cost $50.00 x 3½ = $175.00

Example 2

The following example will give a better idea of how to organize a detailed estimate. You can apply this example to other areas such as framing, roof, trim and so on.

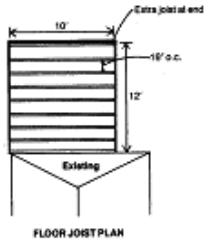
Breakdown Total Cost Estimate for Typical Foundation				
Item	**Unit**	**Cost/Unit**	**Quantity**	**Total**
Concrete	cu. yd.	50.00	3.6	
Mudsill	lin. ft.	.50	32	
Waterproof Membrane	sq. ft.	.10	144	
Formwork	sq. ft.	.25	50	
Steel	lin. ft.	.10	100	
Anchor	each	.25	10	
String	lin. ft.	.01	500	
			Total	

Note: Remember to add for waste.

- You can save money if joists can be used as formwork.
- Include tool rental fee, cost of new equipment and travel expenses in your estimates.

Example 3

How many floor joists will be necessary for the same addition as in Example 1? How much will they cost?



FLOOR JOIST PLAN

Step one: Find span and size of joists. Assume you will span across the 10-foot distance and joists will be 2 x 6 lumber on 16-inch centers.

Step two: Determine the quantity of joists necessary. Divide the length of the side of the addition from which joists will span by the spacing between each joist. Keep all measurements in feet. Add one joist for the end. Ten floor joists will be necessary. So, 12 feet divided by 16 inches or 1.33 feet = 9 joists

How much will ten 2 x 6 joists spanning 10 feet cost?

Assume 2 x 6 joists are 45¢ per linear foot.

Step one: Find the total number of linear feet in 10 joists that span 10 feet each. In other words, what is the total length of all the joists you will be using? So, 10 joists at 10 feet each = l0 x 10 feet = 100 linear feet

Step two: Find the total cost. Multiply the total linear feet of joists times the cost of one linear foot of 2 x 6 lumber. So, 100 linear feet x 45¢ = $45.00—total cost for floor joists

NOTE: *"2 x 6" DOES NOT MEAN THE JOIST MEASURES 2 inches by 6 inches. This is the nominal designation and is commonly used in talking about lumber even though the actual dimensions are less. YOU ARE NOT BEING CHEATED IF A 2 x 6 DOES NOT MEASURE UP.*

These problems should give you an idea of how to estimate the cost of your particular project. There are many different ways to estimate, so don't be afraid to try your own method.

COST ESTIMATION CHART

The following chart lists most (but not all) of the materials needed for the kind of residential construction most do-it-yourselfers undertake. It is arranged roughly chronologically—the first construction phases are listed first, and so on. By using the appropriate sections of this chart for your particular project, you can get a better idea of what your project will cost and what you need to buy.

When materials are sold or measured in standardized or customary units, an abbreviation of that measure follows the material or item listed in parentheses. Thus, if you wanted to replace a small window with a sliding glass door, you would fill in Sections 1-B, 4-B, perhaps 8-A/B, 9-A/B, 10-B, 13 and 14 on the cost estimation chart on the following page. As you do this, note that the lumber for the header over the window is sold by the linear foot (LN. FT.), sheetrock is sold by the square foot in 4-foot by 8-foot panels, etc. You should also make a note of what types of materials you would use (Is the glass door wood or aluminum? What kind of glass? How many feet and what type of weatherstripping will you use?) and the appropriate dimensions.

A more elaborate project would require you to fill out more sections under the appropriate "Work Phase". Sometimes, even for a small project, not all the materials you will need will be listed. The purpose of this chart is to help you estimate the cost of your project; you will undoubtedly have to make more detailed or specific estimates as you go. This chart is also designed to get you to think in terms of quantity and get you to answer some questions about your project (How big is a window? Where?) to help you make the decisions. Used properly, it can prove an invaluable beginning in the cost estimation process for your job.

KEY:
YD. – Cubic yard. Volume of dirt, concrete, etc. 3' x 3' x 3' square.
EA – Each. Count the number of bricks, fixtures, or whatever you need.
LB. – Pound. Weight of nails or steel rebar needed. Ask how many per LB.
FT./LN. FT. – Feet/linear feet. Usually the length of lumber used or total length of pipe or wiring. A 10' 2 x 4 = 10 LN. FT.
ROLLS – Roofing paper, wall paper, insulation, etc., come in rolls. Ask area (SQ. FT.) coverage per roll.
BATTS – (Insulation) Precut to fit between studs, usually 13"-15"x 8'. More convenient, more expensive.
SQUARES – (Roofing shingles) An arbitrary measure that will cover approximately 100 SQ. FT.
GAL. – (Roofing mastic, paint, any liquid) Look for suggested coverage area per gallon on the can and deduct 10-15% to figure out your needs.

Work Phase/Additional Specifications	Estimated Cost		Actual Cost	Notes	Check off or N/A (Not Applicable)	
	Per Unit	Total				
10.Weatherproofing						
A. Insulation (several types, BATTS, ROLLS, or SQ. FT)						
Walls (R-11)						
Ceilings/roof (R-19)						
Slab/floors						
B. Weatherstripping/caulking						
Exterior doors/windows						
Joints/corners						
Vapor barrier in walls						
11.Finish Materials						
A. Floor coverings (room & type—SQ.FT.)						
Hardwood						
Linoleum/vinyl						
Carpeting						
Other						
B. Countertops (room & type—SQ.FT.)						
Ceramic tile						
Formica or other laminate						
Marlite or Corian for bathrooms						
Other						
C. Wall treatments (room & type—SQ.FT.)						
Paintings/type of paint						
Wallpaper						
Paneling						
Special coverings						
D. Special Fixtures						
Kitchen appliances						
Bathroom accessories						
Built-in cabinets/shelving						
Special ceiling treatments						
12.Miscellaneous Expenses						
A. Tool/equipment rental						
B. Hardware						
Rough(nails, joist hangers, screws, bolts, etc.) (LB./EA.)						
Finish(doorknobs, hinges, etc.)						
C. Landscaping/sprinklers, outdoor lighting						
D. Other expenses						
13.Subtotal of Job Cost(less contracted labor)						
A. Add in at least 10% of the above as a contingency factor to protect your estimate			**=Subtotal (13) x .10**			
B. Add in any finance charges which add to the cost of the job						
C. Cost of contracted labor where used						
Cost of workmen's compensation insurance (if any)						
14.Total Job Cost (Include 13 & 13A, 13B & 13C to arrive at TOTAL)						

WHY GET A PERMIT?

There are several advantages to doing home improvement projects with a building permit. The primary one is that getting a permit brings you into compliance with local codes and regulations and the services of DC government plan reviewers and inspectors. The inspector approves each phase of the construction process, checking to see that work is done safely and properly. Inspectors also can advise you on how to proceed if you get stuck.

Second, there are legal and financial liabilities that you face when you don't get a permit. Work without a permit is illegal and can result in hefty fines and pose serious complications for you when you try to sell your house. Any fire and homeowner's insurance you have will be invalidated if you do work without a permit. If there is a fire in your house, the insurance company will use the illegal work as an excuse to not pay on your claim.

WHO CAN GET A PERMIT?

Building permits may be issued to the owner of a dwelling or residential property, or any agent who is designated by the owner. Supplemental permits, such as for electrical or plumbing, will only be issued to contractors who are licensed in the District of Columbia.

WHAT KIND OF PERMIT?

There are four different permits associated with most home improvement:

- Building Permit
- Plumbing Permit (Supplemental)
- Mechanical Permit (Supplemental)
- Electrical Permit (Supplemental)

All structural and some nonstructural work on your dwelling requires a building permit. If you have questions about your particular plans, call the Building and Land Regulation Administration.

If your project also involves some plumbing, wiring or air conditioning, you will need one or more of the other three supplemental permits listed above.

Permits are relatively simple to obtain. When you have completed your drawings, simply go to DCRA's Homeowners Center. Speak with a staff member and explain what you plan to do. When you have completed the proper application for your permit, submit it with the necessary drawings.

FEES

A fee is required for each permit.

Fees change periodically. The Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs permit fee schedule is located on its website at **www.dcra.dc.gov.** In addition, depending on the scope of work, you may also be required to pay fees for reviews performed by other agencies, such as the Department of Health, the Water and Sewer Authority, and the District Department of Transportation.

Permits are not valid forever! If work has not begun within a one year after the permit is issued, or if work is stopped for over one year, your permit may expire and must be renewed. Call the building inspection division for information on how to prevent expirations and additional fees.

RESPONSIBILITIES

SUBCONTRACTORS SHOULD TAKE OUT THEIR OWN PERMITS, WHICH MAKES THEM LEGALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR PORTION OF THE WORK.

It is your responsibility if you are acting as your own general contractor to see that the appropriate permits are obtained for your project. If you are hiring a licensed subcontractor, he or she must obtain the plumbing, mechanical or electrical permit in his or her name, but it is up to you to make sure that this occurs.

SCHEDULING THE JOB

As you begin work, the most important thing to remember is never to get ahead of one phase of construction if it means certain jobs will have to be done again. You should complete a written schedule of all aspects of the job, from materials delivery to subcontractor payments to inspection dates. That way you can avoid major pitfalls and overcome the inevitable minor ones.

MATERIALS AND SITE PREPARATION

As a do-it-yourselfer you and your family will be living on the construction site. For convenience, plan to keep existing kitchen and bath facilities in use as long as possible. It may be very helpful to call a rubbish removal outfit and have a bin placed on your property to catch debris as it accumulates.

Also prepare for storage. Unless you have ample garage or storage space, schedule building materials to arrive as you need them so that they won't get trampled, rained on or stolen.

You should know what materials you cannot use. In some areas, for instance, plastic pipe is not approved except for garden sprinkler systems. Don't buy it and think you can use it.

When shopping for materials, take advantage of sales and promotions. However, don't be tempted to buy something you don't need, and don't buy anything without measuring—a stove 6 inches too wide won't fit any better than a stove 5 feet too wide.

Buying locally will save shipping charges, and buying in bulk will save on many small deliveries. You can duplicate your supply list and give it to several local building suppliers to get a bid for all your materials. You may get a discount and save time if everything comes from one place. On the other hand, catalog shopping will be cheaper on some items.

Your subcontractor may be buying much or all of your materials for you. But you get to make the final decision on what to use, and your contract agreement should say so. Also, the subcontractor will charge you for his or her buying time. The total cost may balance out since contractors can get special discounts, but you should know how the cost breaks down before signing your contract, and you may qualify for discounts yourself.

APPENDICES

A. Safety Hints

It may seem like a contradiction to be neat about messy construction work, but it is the first rule for any responsible builder who wants to avoid serious accidents. The second rule is to protect those who work with you.

The following tips are only a basis for your safety plan. You should develop your own careful work procedure and stick to it.

CONSTRUCTION TIPS

- Clean up debris frequently and put tools away after every day's work.
- Never do wiring work with electricity turned on, with wet or sweaty hands or while standing in water.
- When touching a circuit protective panel, wear dry gloves or rubber-soled shoes, stand on a dry board and touch the panel with one hand only, leaving the other completely free.
- Replace a blown fuse with one of the same rating.
- Look for the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) seal on wiring products; it offers some assurance of quality.
- Check all ladder rungs and side rails for strength. Make sure your ladder is long enough; at least two rungs should extend above the rung on which you need to stand.
- If your body feels tired, STOP; don't push it.

B. Legal Recourse

STAYING OUT OF TROUBLE

Filing suit may help you retrieve some money, but it cannot begin to reimburse you for your lost time, aggravation and disappointment. Two hundred dollars in damages may make you feel better, but it probably won't realign the crooked countertop. The courtroom should be regarded as the place of last resort. The following tips should help you avoid serious disagreements in the first place:

- Get everything in writing. Whether you are dealing with a subcontractor or a neighbor, write down what you expect from the other person and what he should get in return. Ink lasts longer than verbal agreements.
- Don't worry about technical jargon. A simple handwritten note with a date and the signatures of those involved will help you solve small disagreements. It is also sufficient evidence in court.
- Make copies of all documents. You should have a spare copy of all contracts, sales receipts, and neighborly agreements that you can tuck away in a safe place just in case the original gets misplaced.
- Understand before signing. Never sign a written agreement that you do not understand. Do not be pressured by someone's impatience. You may be liable for whatever you agree to in print. Ask questions until you are satisfied.
- Keep your eyes open. Watch different procedures. If you don't like the way a tub is being installed, a beam is placed or a door is hung, you can stop it much more easily in the beginning than after it has already been

done. It will be much harder, not to mention more expensive, to rip a tile counter out and order new tile than to move a few tiles over at the start.

- Try to solve problems when they happen. If you and a contractor or neighbor remembers two different things, stop work and get out your written agreement. You can probably clear up the question immediately rather than let tempers brew to the point where you deliberately avoid cooperating.

C. Checklist of DC Zoning Restrictions

CR		Permits matter-of-right residential, commercial, and certain light industrial development to a maximum lot occupancy of 75 percent for residential use, a maximum FAR of 6.0 for residential and 3.0 for other permitted uses and a maximum height of 90 feet. Residential recreation space is required.
C-1		Permits matter-of-right neighborhood shopping and low density development to a maximum lot occupancy of 60 percent for residential use, a maximum FAR of 1.0, and a maximum height of three stories/40 feet.
C-2-A		Permits matter-of-right low density development, including office, retail and all kinds of residential uses to a maximum lot occupancy of 60 percent for residential use, a maximum FAR of 2.5 for residential use and 1.5 FAR for other permitted uses and a maximum height of 50 feet.
C-2-B		Permits matter-of-right medium density development, including office, retail, housing and mixed uses to a maximum lot occupancy of 80 percent for residential use, a maximum FAR of 3.5 for residential use and 1.5 FAR for other permitted uses and a maximum height of 65 feet.
C-2-C		Permits matter-of-right high density development, including office, retail, housing and mixed uses to a maximum lot occupancy of 80 percent for residential use, a maximum FAR of 6.0 for residential and 2.0 FAR for other permitted uses and a maximum height of 90 feet.
C-3-A		Permits matter-of-right development for major retail and office uses to a maximum lot occupancy of 75 percent for residential use, a maximum FAR of 4.0 for residential and 2.5 FAR for other permitted uses and a maximum height of 65 feet.
C-3-B		Permits matter-of-right development for major business and employment centers of medium density development, including office, retail, housing and mixed uses to a maximum lot occupancy of 100 percent, a maximum FAR of 5.0 for residential and 4.0 FAR for other permitted uses and a maximum height of six stories/70 feet.
C-3-C		Permits matter-of-right development for major business and employment centers of medium/high density development, including office, retail, housing and mixed uses to a maximum lot occupancy of 100 percent, a maximum FAR of 6.5 for residential and for other permitted uses and a maximum height of 90 feet.
C-4		The downtown core comprising the retail and office centers for the District of Columbia and the metropolitan area, and allows office, retail, housing and mixed uses to a maximum lot occupancy of 100 percent, a maximum FAR of 8.5 to 10.0 and a maximum height of 110 feet and 130 on 110-foot adjoining streets. (Maximum height and FAR depend on width of adjoining streets.)
C-5		Pennsylvania Avenue Development (PAD) permits retail and office, housing and mixed development in the area on the north side of Pennsylvania Avenue, NW between First Street and 15th Street, NW to a maximum lot occupancy of 100 percent, a maximum FAR of 10.0 to 12.0 and a maximum height of 130 to 160 feet. (Maximum height and FAR depend upon approval of bonus incentives.)

CM (1&2)		For existing single family homes only: permits matter-of-right development of single-family residential uses (including detached, semidetached and row dwellings), churches and public schools with a minimum lot width of 20 feet, a minimum lot area of 2,000 square feet, a maximum lot occupancy of 60 percent for row dwellings, a minimum lot width of 30 feet and a minimum lot area of 3,000 square feet and 40 percent lot occupancy for semidetached structures, a minimum lot width of 40 feet and a minimum lot area of 4,000 square feet and 40 percent lot occupancy for detached structure and a maximum height of three stories/40 feet.
R-1-A		Permits matter-of-right development of single-family residential uses for detached dwellings with a minimum lot width of 75 feet, a minimum lot area of 7,500 square feet, a maximum lot occupancy of 40 percent for residential use and 60 percent for church and public school use and a maximum height of three stories/40 feet.
R-1-B		Permits matter-of-right development of single-family residential uses for detached dwellings with a minimum lot width of 50 feet, a minimum lot area of 5,000 square feet, a maximum lot occupancy of 60 percent for a church or public school use and 40 percent for all other structures and a maximum height of three stories/40 feet.
R-2		Permits matter-of-right development of single-family residential uses for detached and semidetached structures, with a minimum lot width of 40 feet and lot area of 4,000 square feet for detached structures, and 30 feet and 3,000 square feet for semidetached structures; a maximum lot occupancy of 60 percent for church and public school use and 40 percent for all other structures and a maximum height of three stories/40 feet.
R-3		Permits matter-of-right development of single-family residential uses (including detached, semidetached, and row dwellings), churches and public schools with a minimum lot width of 20 feet, a minimum lot area of 2,000 square feet, a maximum lot occupancy of 60 percent for row dwellings, a minimum lot width of 30 feet and a minimum lot area of 3,000 square feet and 40 percent lot occupancy for semidetached structures, a minimum lot width of 40 feet and a minimum lot area of 4,000 square feet and 40 percent lot occupancy for detached structure and a maximum height of three stories/40 feet.
R-4		Permits matter-of-right development of single-family residential uses (including detached, semidetached, row dwellings, and flats), churches and public schools with a minimum lot width of 18 feet, a minimum lot area of 1,800 square feet and a maximum lot occupancy of 60 percent for row dwellings, churches and flats, a minimum lot width of 30 feet and a minimum lot area of 3,000 square feet for semidetached structures, a minimum lot width of 40 feet and a minimum lot area of 4,000 square feet and 40 percent lot occupancy for all other structures and a maximum height of three stories/40 feet. Conversions of existing buildings to apartments are permitted for lots with a minimum lot area of 900 square feet per dwelling unit.
R-5-A		Permits matter-of-right development of single-family residential uses for detached and semidetached dwellings, and with the approval of the Board of Zoning Adjustment, new residential development of low-density residential uses including row houses, flats and apartments to a maximum lot occupancy of 40 percent, 60 percent for churches and public schools, a maximum floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.9 and a maximum height of three stories/40 feet. Conversion of existing buildings to flat or apartment use is permitted as a matter of right provided all other provisions of the zoning regulations are complied with.
R-5-B		Permits matter-of-right moderate development of general residential uses, including single-family dwellings, flats and apartment buildings, to a maximum lot occupancy of 60 percent, a maximum FAR of 1.8 and a maximum height of 50 feet.

R-5-C		Permits matter-of-right medium density development of general residential uses, including single-family dwellings, flats and apartment buildings, to a maximum lot occupancy of 75 percent, a maximum FAR of 3.0 and a maximum height of 60 feet.
R-5-D		Permits matter-of-right medium/high density development of general residential uses, including single-family dwellings, flats and apartment buildings, to a maximum lot occupancy of 75 percent, a maximum FAR of 3.5 and a maximum height of 90 feet.
R-5-E		Permits matter-of-right high density development of general residential uses, including single-family dwellings, flats and apartment buildings, to a maximum lot occupancy of 75 percent, a maximum FAR of 6.0 for apartment houses and hotels, and 5.0 for other structures and a maximum height of 90 feet.
SP-1		Permits matter-of-right medium density development including all kinds of residential uses, with limited offices for non-profit organizations, trade associations and professionals permitted as a special exception requiring approval of the BZA, to a maximum lot occupancy of 80 percent for residential use, a maximum FAR of 4.0 for residential and 2.5 for other permitted uses and a maximum height of 65 feet.
SP-2		Permits matter-of-right medium/high density development including all kinds of residential uses, with limited offices for nonprofit organizations, trade associations and professionals permitted as a special exception requiring approval of the BZA, to a maximum lot occupancy of 80 percent for residential use, a maximum FAR of 6.0 for residential and 3.5 for other permitted uses and a maximum height of 90 feet.

D. Building Material Suppliers

There are many materials suppliers in the DC area who offer advice and discounts to the do-it-yourself builder. They can help you cost out your project, find special items and become familiar with the impressive amount of materials available in the area. The Yellow Pages provide another excellent source of information, but don't be taken in by flashy ads. Ask about the supplier's policies and special services. Do they offer a contractor's discount? Do they take phone orders? Do they deliver? Call ahead, compare quality and prices, and shop around until you find what you want.

E. Glossary

BEAM: A principal structural member used between posts, columns or walls.
BEARING OR WALL PARTITION: A wall which supports a vertical load like the roof.
CAMBER: A slight curve in a beam or other horizontal structural member that prevents it from bending into a downward or concave shape due to its load.
CAULK: To seal a crack or joint and make it water or air tight, especially around window or exterior door frames.
COLUMN: An upright supporting member; can be circular or rectangular in shape.
CONDUIT: (Electrical) A pipe or tube, usually metal, in which wiring is installed.
COST OUT: To make an estimate of the cost of any part of or the entire project.

DIMENSIONAL STABILITY: The ability of a material to resist changes in its dimensions due to temperature, humidity and/or physical stress.
DRY WALL: Materials used for wall covering (interior) that do not need to be mixed with water before application. Also called gypsum board or wallboard.
EAVES: The lower part of a roof that projects over the exterior wall. Also called "overhang."
ELEVATIONS: Drawings that show the exterior sides of your building.
FACADE: Main or front elevation.
FOUNDATION: The supporting portion of a building, usually concrete (including the footings), which sits below grade or below the first-floor construction.
FRAMING: The wood structure of a building that gives it strength and shape; includes exterior and interior walls, floor, roof, ceilings.
GENERAL CONTRACTOR: Person overseeing a construction job; may include buying materials, hiring special contractors, doing physical labor.
GIRDER: A large or principal beam used to support concentrated loads or weight at particular points along its length.
GLAZING: The process of installing glass into window frames (sash) and doors.
GYPSUM BOARD: The generic name for a family of noncombustible sheet products consisting of a core primarily of gypsum and paper surfacing.
HEADER: Horizontal structural member that supports the load over an opening such as a window or door. Also called a "lintel."
INSULATION: (Thermal) Any material high in resistance to heat transmission; placed in structures to reduce the rate of heat flow (heat gain or loss).
JOINERY: A term used by woodworkers when referring to various types of joints or connections between wood members used in the structure of the building.
JOIST: One of the series of parallel framing members used to support the floor and ceiling; joists are supported in turn by larger beams, girders or bearing walls.
LATH: A building material of wood, metal, gypsum or insulating board fastened to the frame of a building to act as a plaster base. Used in the phrase "lath and plaster."
LIEN: The right to enforce a charge against the property of another until some claim or unpaid charge is satisfied.
LIGHT CONSTRUCTION: Construction generally restricted to conventional wood stud walls, floor and ceiling joists and rafters. Primarily used in houses and small buildings.
LINTEL: See **HEADER.**
LOAD: Weight that must be taken into account to design the strength of a structure. Tables in the International Codes will give typical loads.

Dead Load: *A nonvariable weight; the weight of the building materials themselves. The roof is a dead load on the walls; the roof and the walls are a dead load on the foundation, etc.*
Live Load: *The total of all moving and variable loads (furniture, people, appliances) that can safely be placed upon a building.*

MEMBER: Any unit or element of construction usually referred to when speaking of structural components of the building.
NOMINAL SIZE: As applied to timber or lumber, the commercial size by which it is known and sold. Wood that is called 2 x 4 measures only 1½ inches by 3½ inches.
NONBEARING PARTITION: A wall extending from floor to ceiling that supports no load other than its own weight; designed to separate rooms. Can be knocked down without jeopardizing the safety or strength of the structure.

ON CENTER (O.C.): A method of indicating the spacing between framing members by stating the measurement from the center of one member to the center of the next.
PARTITION: A wall that subdivides space within one floor or story of the building.
PIER: A small column of masonry or concrete (usually drawn rectangular in plan) used to support other beams or columns as part of the foundation of the building.
PITCH: Slope, as of roofs or stairs. It is computed by dividing the rise by the run. (A roof that rises 5 feet over a 20-foot length (run) has a one-in-four pitch, 5/20 = ¼).
PLAN: A drawing representing any one of the floors or horizontal cross sections of the building. Usually taken at 4 feet above the floor so as to cut through most structures—windows, built-in cabinets, etc. Plot plan shows the buildings on your site.
PLATE: A nailing board placed over the foundation sill or rafter used to connect the foundation or rafters to the wall.
RAFTER: One of a series of structural members of a roof that supports the roof's weight.
RETAINING WALL: A wall used to support or keep back earth; below-grade foundation walls.
RISER: The vertical piece between consecutive stair treads.
ROUGHING IN: The work of installing plumbing, gas or electrical systems to the point where it is ready to be connected to sewage, water supply pipes or electrical wires. An inspection is always made after roughing in to make sure the systems are functional and safe before final connect.
ROUGH OPENING: The opening formed by the framing members. This is one of the several measurements that may be used when ordering doors and windows. Other measurements used are finish opening (the dimension of an opening after sash is installed).
SHEATHING PAPER (building paper): A protective building material used in wall, floor and roof construction to resist the passage of moisture.
SIDING: The finish covering of the outside wall of a frame building. Many different types are available such as aluminum, vinyl, wood, etc.
SPAN: Distance between structural supports such as walls, columns, piers, beams, etc.
STRUCTURAL SYSTEM: The method of construction; typically, platform wood framing (wood stud walls) in houses.
STUD: One of vertical structural members in walls or partitions, typically 2 x 4 or 2 x 6. Also, refers to the type of construction as in "stud wall construction."
SUBCONTRACTOR/SPECIALTY CONTRACTOR: A craftsperson under contract to the owner or general contractor to do a particular phase of construction such as plumbing or wiring.
SURVEY: An exact measurement of your property lines done by a licensed surveyor or civil engineer.
TOENAILING: To drive a nail at an angle for better stability.
VENT: A pipe installed to provide a flow of air to or from a drainage system; or to provide a circulation of air within plumbing systems to prevent siphonage or back pressure from contaminating the water supply.
WAIVER: An exception to requirements; a fee waiver means you do not have to pay normal fees.
WALLBOARD: Wood pulp, gypsum or other materials made into large sheets (typically 4 feet by 8 feet) that are fastened to the frame of the building to provide a surface finish.

Appendix F DC BUILDING PERMIT APPLICATION

PRE-FILE NUMBERS		ZONING DISTRICT	FILE NUMBER	PERMIT NUMBER	
N.C.P.C. No:	O.G. No:				By:
H.P.A. No:	S.L. No:	Ward No:	Receipt No:	Date:	Receipt No:

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

BLRA-33 (Rev. 2/04)

CLEARANCE TO FILE
By_____Date_____

DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
BUILDING AND LAND REGULATION ADMINISTRATION PERMIT SERVICE CENTER
Tel 202-442-4589 Fax 202-442-4862

APPLICATION FOR CONSTRUCTION PERMITS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY
(PRINT IN INK OR TYPE, DO NOT WRITE IN SHADED AREAS OR ON PAGE 4)

(A) ALL APPLICANTS MUST COMPLETE ITEMS 1 THRU 27

1. Address of Proposed Work	Suite No.	2. Lot	3. Square	4. Application Date

5. Owner of Building or Property	6. Address (*include Zip Code*	7. Phone
8. Agent for Owner (*if applicable)*	**9. Address (*include Zip Code)***	**10. Phone**

11. Type of Proposed Work (check all applicable boxes)

- ☐ New Building
- ☐ Addition
- ☐ Alteration and Repair
- ☐ Raze Building
- ☐ Retaining Wall
- ☐ Fence
- ☐ Shed
- ☐ Awning
- ☐ Garage
- ☐ Sign
- ☐ Projection
- ☐ Other (*Specify)* _____

12. Description of Proposed Work

13. Existing Use(s) of Building or Property	14. Ex. No. of Stories of Bldg	15. Ex. No. of Dwelling Units	**Official Use Only** Miscellaneous FEE $	
16. Proposed Use(s) of Building or Property	17. Prop. No. of Stories of Bldg	18. Prop. No. of Dwelling Units	By:	Date:

19. Starting Date	20. Completion Date of Work	21. Method of Removing Construction Debris ☐ Pick-up Truck ☐ Dumpster ☐ Other (*specify*)	22. Does the proposed work involve **disturbing the earth** or razing a building? ☐ Yes, answer q. 23 ☐ No, SKIP q. 23-27

23. Is the area of disturbed earth more than 50 sq. ft? ☐ Yes, answer **q. 24-25** ☐ No, SKIP **q. 24-25**	24. Soil Erosion Control Methods	25. Area of Offsite Drainage sq. ft	26. No. of Footings or Columns	27. Size of Footings or Columns

ALWAYS SIGN THE APPLICATION ON PAGE 3 (SECTION I)

Complete Section B if the proposed work is **new building, addition or alteration.** (Page 2)
Complete Section C if the proposed work is **razing a building.** (Page 2)
Complete Section D if the proposed work is a **retaining wall.** (Page 2)
Complete Section E if the proposed work is a **fence.** (Page 3)
Complete Section F if the proposed work is a **shed/garage.** (Page 3)
Complete Section G if the proposed work is an **awning.** (Page 3)
Complete Section H if the proposed work is a **sign.** (Page 3)

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

	R	P	H	A	
M					
P					
E					W ☐ Yes ☐ No
F					PLANS
S					☐ No ☐ Sm ☐ Lg

(B) NEW BUILDING, ADDITION, & ALTERATION (COMPLETE ITEMS 28 THRU 60)

28. Architect's Name	29. D.C. Lic. No.	30. Architect's Address *(include Zip Code)*	31. Phone
32. Engineer's Nam:	33. D.C. Lic. No.	34. Engineer's Address *(include Zip Code)*	35. Phone
36. Building Contractor's Name	36A. D.C. Lic. No.	37. Contractor's Address	38. Phone

39. Type of Construction	40. Fire Suppression	41. Booster Pump	42. Total Lot Area	43. Breakdown of Lot Area (= 100 %)		
☐ Masonry ☐ Steel ☐ Wood ☐ Other ☐ Concrete	☐ Fully Sprinklered ☐ Standpipe System ☐ Partially Sprinklered ☐ None ☐ Other _____	☐ New ☐ Existing ☐ None	sq. ft.	a. building		%
				b. paved area		%
				c. greenery		%

44. Present Gross Floor Area of Bldg. sq. ft	45. Proposed Gross Floor Area of Bldg. sq. ft.	46. Floors involved in this permit ☐ All ☐ Floors _____	47. Projection beyond building line? ☐ Yes, Answer q. 48 -52 ☐ No. SKIP q. 48-52

48. Number and Type of Projection	49. Distance of Projection	50. Width of Projection	51. Width of Building Frontage ft. 52. Signature of Owner (**projection only**)

53. Water or Sewer Excavation?	54. Driveway Construction?	55. Sheeting/Shoring Necessary?	56. Elevators Involved?	57. No. and Type of Elevator	58. Plans Certified by Engineer?
☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes, answer **q. 57** ☐ No		☐ Yes, cert. attached ☐ No

59. Estimated Cost of Work
(a) New/Add.: $ _____
(b) Alt/ Repair $ _____
Total $ _____

60. Volume of New Bldg. or Addition cubic ft.

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Alter/Repair FEE		New Const. FEE		Filing Fee		TOTAL PERMIT FEE	
$		$		$		$	
By:	Date:	By:	Date:	By:	Date:	By:	Date:

(C) RAZING A BUILDING (COMPLETE ITEMS 61 THRU 83)

61. Raze Contractor's Name:	62. Contractor's Address *(include Zip Code)*	63. Phone:

64. Insurance Company	65. Policy or Cert. Number	66. Expiration Date	67. Raze Method

68. Building Material	69. Raze Entire Building?	70. Building Condemned?	70A. Building Vacant?	71. Public Space Vault?	72. Disconnect Water and/or Sewer?	73. Size of Water Connection
	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No	☐ Yes ☐ No	in.

74. Plumber's Name	75. D.C. Lic. No.	76. Length ft.	77. Width ft.	78. Height ft.	79. Volume ft.	80. Party Wall?
						☐ Yes ☐ No

81. Asbestos in the Building?
☐ No ☐ Yes, location _____

82. Raze Contractor Signature

83. Owner's Signature

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FEE	By:	Date:
$		

(D) RETAINING WALL (COMPLETE ITEMS 84 THRU 93)

The retaining wall will not obstruct any accessible parking required by D.C. Zoning Regulations

84. Cost of Work $	85. Material	86. Height	87. Color	88. Location ☐ Entirely on Owner's Land ☐ Party Line with Adjacent Neighboring Land *

* If party wall, the owner of the adjoining property must agree to the erection of the retaining wall and this application

89. Signature of Adjoining Owner	90: Phone Home Work	
91. Address of Adjoining Owner	92. Lo:	A) Square

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FEE	By:	Date:
$		

(E) FENCE (COMPLETE ITEMS 94 THRU 102) **The fence will not obstruct any accessible parking required by D.C. Zoning Regulations**

94. Material and type	95. Height ft.	96. Color	97. Location ☐ Entirely on Owner's Land ☐ Party Line with Adjacent Neighboring Land *

* If party fence, the owner of the adjoining property must agree to the erection of the fence and this application

98. Signature of Adjoining Owner	99. Phone Work / Home	**OFFICIAL USE ONLY** FEE $
100. Address of Adjoining Owner	101. Lot / 102. Square	By: / Date:

(F) SHED OR GARAGE (COMPLETE ITEMS 103 THRU 113)

103. Number	104. Length ft.	105. Width ft.	106. Area sq. ft	107. Height ft.	108. Volume cu. ft	109. Est. Cost of Work $	**OFFICIAL USE ONLY** FEE $
							By: / Date:

110. Material of Roof	111. Material of Sides	112. Wall Thickness ☐ External ( ) inches ☐ Party ( ) inches	113. Color

(G) AWNING (COMPLETE ITEMS 114 THRU 123)

114. Number	115. Color	116. Type ☐ Folding ☐ Fixed	117. Projections Beyond bldg. line _____ in. Beyond pt of attachm _____in	118. Height of Lowest Part of Awning (a)_____ ft above sidewalk (b)_____ft above parking (c) _____above grade	**OFFICIAL USE ONLY** FEE $
					By: / Date:

119. Material of Frame	120. Material of Covering	121. Lettering on Awning ☐ Yes ☐ No	122. Fixed Posts? ☐ Yes ☐ No	123. Over Sidewalk café? ☐ Yes ☐ No

(H) SIGN (COMPLETE ITEMS 124 THRU 144

124. Number	125. Electric Signs? ☐ Yes, answer **q. 126-132** ☐ No. SKIP **q. 126-132**	126. Type ☐ Incandes. ☐ Flouresc. ☐ Neon	127. Power _____VA	128. Electrical Contractor License Number:

129. Address of Electrical Contractor (*include Zip)*	130. Signature of Licensed Electrician	131. Phone No.	132. License No.

133. Height relative to building and ground	134. Material of Sign	135. Type of Sign	136. Color
(a) _____ ft _____in above sidewalk (b) _____ ft _____ in above roof (c) _____ ft _____ in is building height (d) _____ ft _____ in above projection of window (e) _____ ft _____ in from roof to sign's bottom			

137. Width ft.	138. Length ft.	139. Area of Sign sq. ft	140. Wide of Business Frontage ft.

141. C of O No for Bldg.	142. Sign Contractor License No.	**OFFICIAL USE ONLY** Sign FEE / Elect. FEE / Total FEE
		$ / $ / $
143. Sign Contractor's Address:	144. Phone:	By: / Date: / By: / Date: / By: / Date:

(I) APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE

A. OWNER: I hereby certify that I am the owner of the property, that the application and plans are complete and correct to the best of my knowledge, that if a permit (or permits) is issued, the construction will conform to the D.C. Construction Codes, the Zoning Regulations, and other applicable laws and regulations of the District of Columbia.

Signature of Owner _____ Address _____ Date _____

B. AGENT: I hereby certify that I have the authority of the owner to make this application. I declare that the application and plans are complete and correct to the best of my knowledge. The owner has assured me that if a permit (or permits) is issued, the construction will conform to the D.C. Construction Codes, the Zoning Regulations, and other applicable laws and regulations of the District of Columbia

Signature of Agent _____Address _____ Date _____

(J) APPROVALS (DO NOT WRITE ON THIS PAGE; OFFICIAL USE ONLY):

A. PERMIT CONTROL

- ☐ 1. Fine Arts by:_____Date:_____
- ☐ 2. Historic by:_____ Date:_____
- ☐ 3. Cap. Gateway by:_____ Date:_____
- ☐ 4. NCPC: _____ Date: _____
- ☐ 5. W.H./Obs. Precinct by:_____ Date:_____
- ☐ 6. Flood Control by: _____ Date:_____
- ☐ 7. WMATA by: _____ Date:_____
- ☐ 8. Condem. by: _____ Date:_____
- ☐ 9. Rental Accom. by: _____ Date:_____
- ☐ 10. Chinatown Distr. by:_____ Date: _____
- ☐ 11. Utility Clearance by: _____ Date: _____
- ☐ 12. General Liability Ins. Policy Clearance by: _____ Date: _____

B. CLEARANCE TO FILE PLANS

- ☐ 1. Zoning by: _____ Date: _____
- ☐ 2. DDOT – Permit and Records Division
  Access to Parking Street ☐ Street ☐ Alley
  Cleared by:_____ Date: _____
- ☐ 3. DDOT – Consumer Engineer
  Cleared by:_____ Date: _____
- ☐ 4. ERA – Erosion Control
  Cleared by: _____ Date: _____

Restrictions of the Permit:

TO REPORT WASTE, FRAUD,
OR ABUSE BY ANY D.C. GOVERNMENT
OFFICIAL, CALL THE D.C. INSPECTOR
GENERAL AT 1-800-521-1639

C. PLANS AND APPLICATION APPROVAL

- ☐ 1. Information Counter by: _____ Date: _____
- ☐ 2. Information Center by: _____ Date:_____
- ☐ ☐ (a) ABRA by: _____ Date:_____
  - ☐ (b) Noise Control by: _____ Date:_____
  - ☐ (c) Industrial Safety by: _____ Date: _____
  - ☐ (d) Vector Control by: _____ Date: _____
  - ☐ (e) D.C. Animal by: _____ Date: _____
  - ☐ (f) Police Dept. by: _____ Date: _____
- ☐ 3. Zoning by: _____ Date: _____
  Zoning Update by: _____ Date:_____
  Zoning Overlay Approval by : _____ Date:_____
- ☐ 4. DDOT – Permit and Records Division/Deposit #
  Sidewalk Deposit $ _____ Driveway Deposit $ _____
  by _____ Date_____
- ☐ 5. Water/Sewer Design Branch
  Consumer Eng. by: _____ Date_____
- ☐ 6. Environmental Regulation Administration
  - ☐ Environmental Policy Review
    Control No. _____
    by _____ Date_____
  - ☐ Erosion Control by:_____ Date_____
  - ☐ Storm Water Mgmt. by: _____ Date _____
    Plan No _____
  - ☐ Air Quality by:_____ Date_____
  - ☐ Underground Storage by:_____ Date_____
- ☐ 7. Mechanical Eng. Review by: _____ Date _____
- ☐ 8. Plumbing Eng. Review by _____ Date _____
- ☐ 9. Electrical Eng. Review by: _____ Date _____
- ☐ 10. Health Plan Review
  - ☐ (a) Food Plan Review by: _____ Date _____
  - ☐ (b) Medical X-Ray Plan Rev.
    by: _____ Date _____
- ☐ 11. Fire Protection Plan Review
  by: _____ Date _____
- ☐ 12. D.C. Fire Dept. (Fire Prevention Plan Review Section)
  by: _____ Date _____
- ☐ 13. Elevator Plan Rev. Sec. by:_____ Date_____
- ☐ 14. Plumbing Insp Rev. by: _____ Date_____
- ☐ 15. Construction Insp. Branch (Field Check)
  by:_____ Date_____
- ☐ 16. Historic Pres. Div. by: _____ Date_____
- ☐ 17 EISF: _____ Date _____
- ☐ 18. Structural Eng. by: _____ Date _____
- ☐ 19. Permit and Certificate Issuance Counter
  by: _____ Date
- ☐ 20. QC By: _____ Date _____

ZONING

C of O Number _____Date _____

Existing Use(s) _____

Proposed Use_____

_____

- ☐ New Bldg
- ☐ P.O.D.
- ☐ File in room 2124

Job No.	BZA Case No	PUD Order No.

DDOT – PUBLIC SPACE

Street Name: _____

Street Width: _____

Road Width: _____

Sidewalk Width: _____

Parking: _____

Restrictions:

G. IMPORTANT LOCATIONS, PHONE NUMBERS AND WEBSITES

Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs
Permit Center
941 North Capitol Street NE #2300
Washington DC 20002
(202) 442-4400
www.dcra.dc.gov

Department of Health
Environmental Health Administration
51 N Street NE
Washington DC 20002
(202) 535-2500
www.dchealth.dc.gov

Department of Transportation
Public Space Management
941 North Capitol Street NE #2300
Washington DC 20002
(202) 442-4670
www.ddot.dc.gov

Office of Planning
Historic Preservation Office
801 North Capitol Street NE
Third Floor
Washington DC 20002
(202) 442-8800
www.planning.dc.gov

Office of the Zoning Administrator
Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs
941 North Capitol Street NE #2000
Washington DC 20002
(202) 442-4576
www.dcra.dc.gov

Water and Sewer Authority
Documents and Permits Division
5000 Overlook Drive SW
Washington DC 20032
(202) 787-2443
www.dcwasa.com

DC Office of Zoning
441 4th Street NW
Washington DC 20001
(202) 727-6311
www.oz.dc.gov

To access the ICC Codes: **www.iccsafe.org**

To access the DC Construction Codes: **www.os.dc.gov**
Municipal Regulations, Title 12

DCRA Homeowners Center
Suite 2102
941 North Capitol Street NE
Washington DC 20002
(202) 442-4400

HOMEOWNERS
Center

941 North Capitol Street, NE
Suite 2102
Washington, DC 20002
(202) 442-4400
www.dcra.dc.gov

Hours:
Monday – Friday: 8:30 AM - 4:30 PM